

# Drifter Newsletter #9

## May 2012

### *New Developments in 2012*

While funding is difficult to come by this year, we have managed to get at least some units in the water after joining forces with a few other groups doing educational/outreach work. As described individually below, we have started a collaboration with NOAA's "Adopt-a-Drifter" and "Teacher-at-Sea" Programs as well as the "Educational Passages" Program. We continue our collaboration with the Marine Advanced Technology and Education folks as well as the National Marine Educators. The alliance with these last two groups has resulted in deployments in other water bodies (Gulf of Mexico, the Pacific Ocean, and in the Great Lakes) in 2012.

### *NOAA's Teacher-at-Sea Program*

Thanks to Jenn Annetta and others at the TAS alumni workshop in mid-May 2012, we were able to construct four "Eddie" drifters. See photo below by Shelley Dawicki (NEFSC). These will be deployed at the end of May 2012 off the coast of New Jersey in 50 meters of water. They will be deployed by Heather Hass (NEFSC) alongside turtles to test the idea that many of these animals are passive drifters.



## ***NOAA's Adopt-a-Drifter Program***

Working with NOAA's Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary folks and Diane Stanitski (ADP) in late April 2012, we deployed one of our Davis-style “Eddie” surface drifters alongside their drogued drifter. We hope to do more of these paired-deployments to document the water-following characteristics of the different drifter designs. Ken Kostel, a Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute videographer on board, was able to produce a great underwater movie of the drifter. If you can view “.mov” files on your computer, you can see it at:

[http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/drifter/eddie\\_deployment\\_underwater.mov](http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/drifter/eddie_deployment_underwater.mov)

## ***Educational Passages***

Finally, another new collaboration is with Dick Baldwin from Belfast Maine who has a unique way to interest elementary and middle-school children in the romance of sail and oceanography. He has unmanned mini-sailboats deployed that sometimes land on distant shores and are recovered by other school children. We have started tracking some of his boats/drifters on our website at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/drifter/>. This is actually a 3-way collaboration with the NOAA salmon researchers John Kocik and Paul Music who attach listening devices. They attempt to capture locations



of tagged salmon smolts. The two boats deployed in the Gulf of Maine off the R/V Henry Bigelow (see photo by Nathan Keith NEFSC) came ashore a few weeks later. Thanks to lobstermen (Greg Runge, Bobby Colbert) and the local harbor masters, they were recovered and will be redeployed at the end of May 2012 in the North Atlantic. They will join five others that are hopefully on their way to Europe!

## ***Future Plans***

As always, we continue to look for funding for more drifter-building workshops and satellite time. We are working with the tracker manufacturer and service provider to minimize the cost to the schools involved. We continue to reduce the cost down within the range of a typical mini-grant proposal but, ideally we hope to someday secure a large gov't grant. This would supply the various schools with the raw material they need to construct these units and to have them connect with their local fishermen for routine deployments offshore.